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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/040,386	01/09/2002	Yoshito Sakai	111636	2053

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. BOX 19928
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, PHUONGCHI T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2833

DATE MAILED: 09/03/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/040,386

Applicant(s)

SAKAI ET AL.

Examiner

Phuongchi T Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06/17/ 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13,14,16 and 24-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 15,17-23 and 26 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 26, line 2, is objected to because of the following informalities: "the plate-shaped supporter" lacks proper antecedence basis. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC, § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office-action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -
(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

3. Claims 13 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as being anticipated by Higuchi et al (US6165007).

In regard to claim 13, Higuchi et al discloses (Attachment 1) a connector assembly for a flat wire member, comprising a first connector (adjacent 4) including connecting terminals (8) accommodated therein, each terminal (8) having a contact arm (8a), and a second connector (adjacent 3) for holding a flat wire member (2), the second connector (adjacent 3) including a plate-shaped supporting member (3c) for supporting a leading end portion (A) of the flat wire member (2), and a housing (3) for retaining the leading end portion (A) on the supporting member (2), the supporting member (3c) and the housing (3) holding the leading end portion (A) in such a way that the leading end portion (A) is movable in a widthwise direction (widthwise direction from 3c to 3b of figure 9), with a portion (A) of the leading end portion (A) being exposed on the housing (3), the first (adjacent 4) and second connectors (adjacent 3)

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having structures (as described above) to couple the connectors with each other by slidably fitting portions (4, 8, 8a, 3, 2, 2a, 2b, 7, 3c) of the connectors (adjacent 4 and 3) one on the other, with the leading end portion (A) being inserted into the first connector (adjacent 4) to engage the contact arms (8a), and the first connector (adjacent 4) further including a positioning member (B) which is to engage a side of the leading end portion (A) of the flat wire member (2) to position the leading end portion (A) in its widthwise relative to the contact arm (8a) when the leading end portion (A) is inserted into the first connector (adjacent 4).

In regard to claim 24, Higuchi et al discloses (Attachment 1) the connector assembly wherein the second connector (adjacent 3) further includes means (C) for placing the flat wire member (2) on the plate-shaped supporting member (3c) in a state that the flat wire member is inclined (adjacent C) downward toward its leading end (A of 2a,b) with respect to a plane (engaged surfaces of 4 and 3c) of the plate-shaped supporting member (3c) to prevent interference between the leading end (A) and the first connector (adjacent 4) when the leading end portion (A) of the flat wire member (2) is inserted into the first connector (adjacent 4).

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 14-23 and 25-26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

5. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

In regard to claim 14, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the connector assembly wherein the connector assembly wherein the flat wire member forming with a pair of protruding portion protruding from a leading edge of the flat wire member at its opposite widthwise ends,

the protruding portions come into contact with the positioning member before the wirings on the flat wire member is inserted in the first connector.

In regard to claim 23, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the connector assembly wherein the second connector has a restricting member fixedly being underside of the flat wire member to engage with a restricting recess formed on the plate-shaped supporting member; the restricting member is prevented from moving relative to the plate-shaped supporting member, in the direction of the insertion of the leading end portion of the flat wire member, but allowed to move in the widthwise direction of the flat wire member relative to the plate-shaped supporting member.

In regard to claim 22, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the connector assembly wherein the width of a leading end portion of the supporting member to be the same or smaller than that of the leading end portion the flat wire member.

In regard to claim 25, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the connector assembly the flat wire member having a first end portion and a second end portion restricted by the first and second plate-shaped supporters of the second connectors corresponding to the first hood portion and second hood portion of the first connector.

In regard to claim 26, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the connector assembly wherein the distance between the projections being larger than the distance between bottom sides of the recesses to allow the leading end portion of the flat wire member to move in its widthwise direction.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Dramstad et al (US6004139) is cited to show in the electrical connector having the

flat wire member has a first and a second end portions (figure 1) and the connector includes a first and a second plate-shaped supporter.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 13-26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuongchi T Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 305-0729. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 8:00AM to 4:30PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on (703) 308 - 2319. The fax phone numbers for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7723 for regular communications and after Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-3329.

August 22, 2003



THO D. TA
PRIMARY EXAMINER

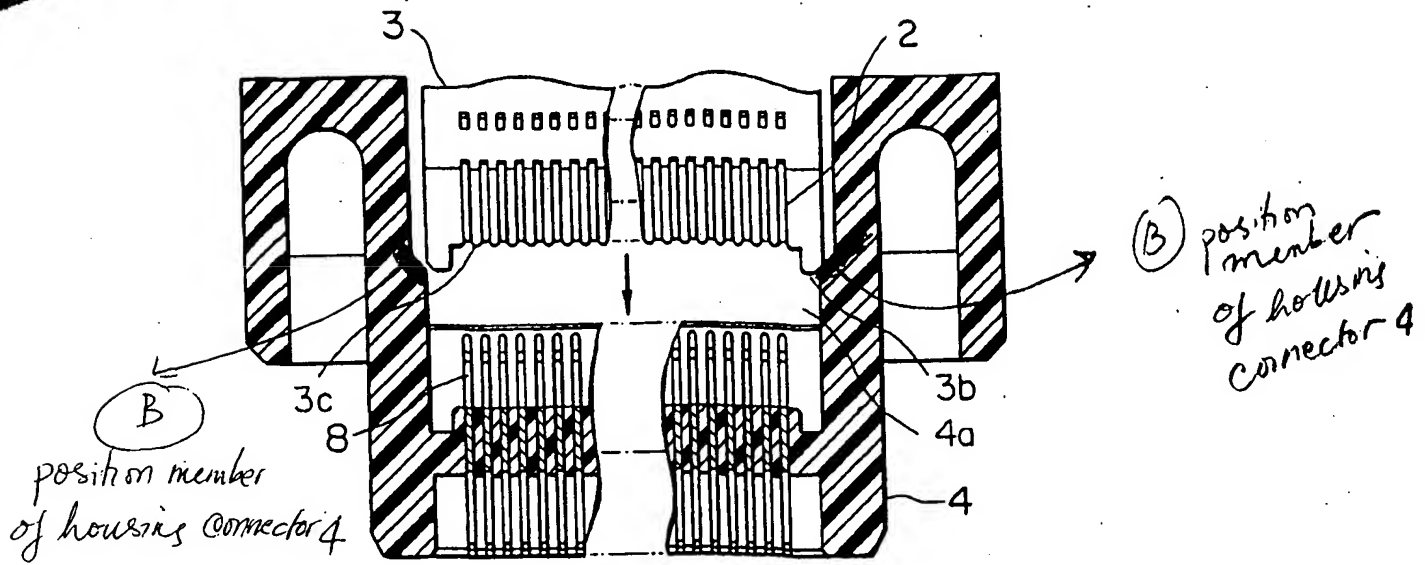


FIG. 9

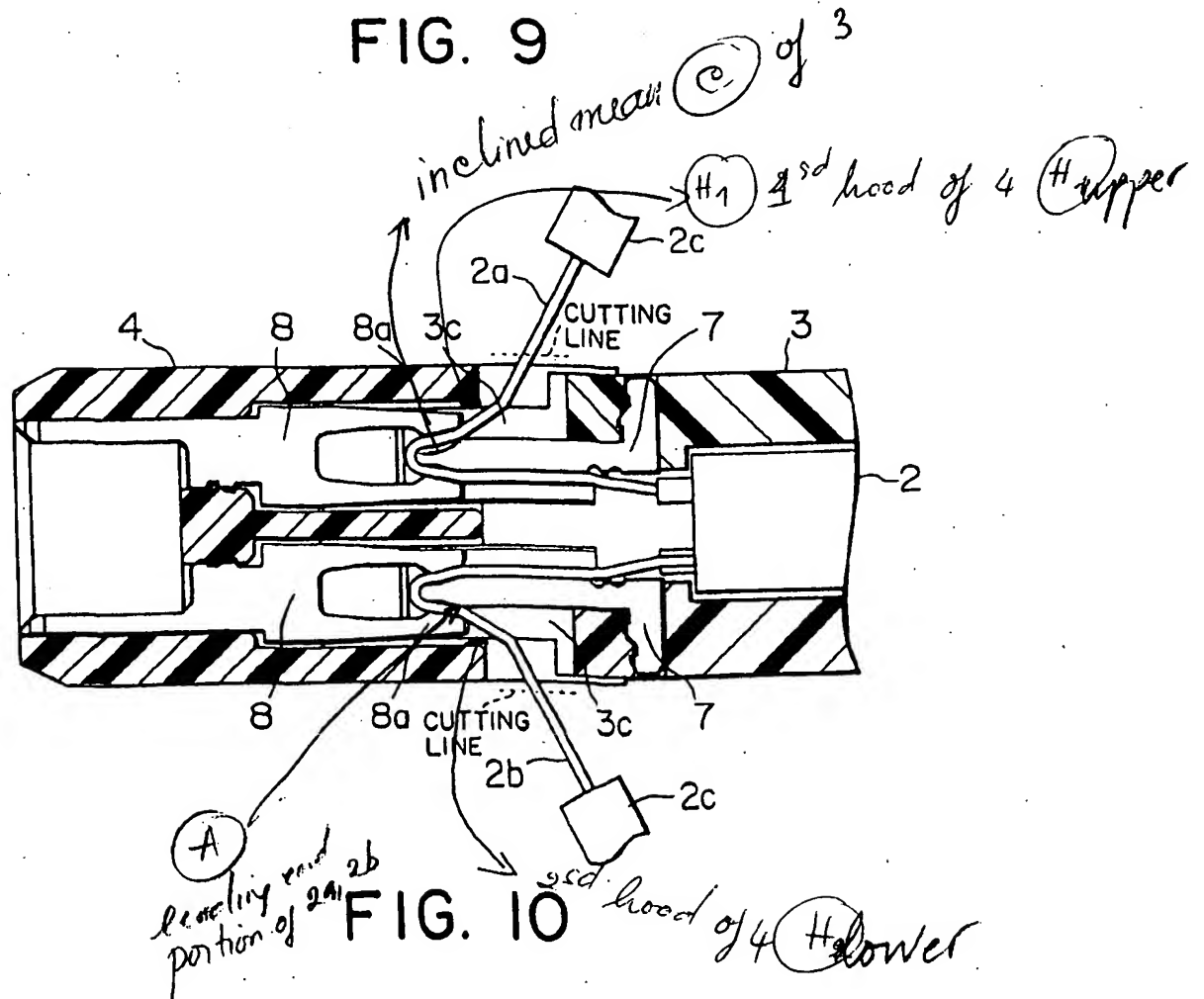


FIG. 10